

M - 102,141

S - 114,716

FEB 26 1967

CPYRGHT

McCarthyism Lingers

By Ed Johnson
Gazette Washington Bureau

in the CIA-NSA Affair

AFTER every major war, the United States suffers from a devastating hang-over and in Washington the pains and frustrations are carefully preserved and nurtured.

The aftermath of the Civil War was Reconstruction, the hardline punishment policy demanded and gotten by the Northern Radicals. Most historians today agree that the unwise course did far more to keep the South out of the mainstream of American life for a century than defeat on the battlefield itself.

* * *

SENATOR J. William Fulbright fully subscribes to an assessment made last week before his Foreign Relations Committee of one of the most persistent maladies ever to afflict the nation and its capital city. The diagnosis was made by Dr. Henry Steele Commager, professor of history at Amherst College. He said that the United States had overextended itself as a world power because of a "moralistic obsession" with communism.

The guns of World War II had hardly been stilled when the Cold War was thrust upon us. Only the foolhardy would disagree today on the choice the United States made in the late Forties to draw a line of Free World commitment for Joe Stalin and his bellicose band to see and understand.

Nothing that Commager and Fulbright fear is the policy of the past that has been sculptured into an obsession of granite. They are further dismayed when the obsession drives the nation to continue a posture that had meaning two decades ago, but that does not fit the current world situation, as they see it.

The most dreadful countenance that the obsession adopted was McCarthyism, a state-of-mind that Washington has not been able to shake entirely long after the entrance and exit of the Wisconsin senator.

* * *

FULBRIGHT views the involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency in student and other non-government organizations as tragicomic with most of the overtones derived from the first part of the blend.

Though the Arkansas senator long has called for the CIA to stick to information-gathering and to stay clear of policy-making and Cold War operations, he has not asked for heads to roll because of the current furor. He labels the subsidy programs by the CIA to student groups particularly distasteful because of the implications that money raises — that an agency of the United States government, cover

has bought off freedom to think and to learn. This implication, and Fulbright has not branded it any more than that, puts the national government in a position that free men find offensive.

The senator, of course, is not opposed to government subsidies to students since a famous program, Fulbright Scholarships, bears his name. And when the nation sends its youth overseas to study and converse with foreign counterparts, it hopefully desires that they be ambassadors for our system. But the difference is, as the senator sees it, the public knowledge and public scrutiny of the Fulbright program versus the secretive operations of the CIA-backed subsidies.

Fulbright is in a position to know that the CIA itself should not be made a scapegoat. In an interview, he said, "The CIA has gotten a lot of jobs it didn't seek and didn't want. Jobs that belonged to the State Department. But the CIA had them dumped in its lap because the State Department couldn't get the money and the CIA gets the money." He added that Presidents and their National Security Councils have turned duties far beyond the original scope of the CIA over to the agency simply because of the dollar-and-cents factor.

* * *

THE SUBSIDIES to the National Student Association go back to 1952, and that year has significance. McCarthyism was at its peak. Whether or not any

agency of the executive branch was tainted by the era is immaterial. This is what is material: Some departments and agencies could ask and get funds, Fulbright pointed out. The money is doled out by Congress, an institution that favors organizations that it trusts. For 20 years, the State Department — a special target of McCarthy — has had to approach Capitol Hill with hat in hand for operational and program funds. That has not been the case with CIA and the Defense Department. In fact, the top Pentagon boss, Secretary Robert McNamara, has been in a position of cold-shouldering money that he did not want but that a military-minded congressional establishment has insisted upon giving him.

* * *

SO FULBRIGHT'S remedy to the CIA situation is a permanent committee in Congress to survey its activities, a measure he pushed last year but with which the Senate did not agree. Like atomic energy, which is supervised by a permanent Joint Senate-House Committee, the CIA has become too big and too powerful to be treated informally as Fulbright holds it is by the current watchdog subcommittee headed by Senator Richard Russell (Dem., Ga.).

A permanent committee could insure close and continued surveillance now and in the future, which Fulbright stoutly maintains is in the public interest.